

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Official Action dated September 27, 2010. Claims 1-18 have been cancelled, Claims 19, 25, 26, 27, 33 and 34 have been amended, and new Claims 35-42 have been added. The application now includes Claims 19-42 with Claims 19, 27 and 35 being the only independent claims. Favorable reconsideration, in view of the above amendments and accompanying remarks, is respectfully requested.

On pages 2-4 of the Official Action, the Examiner has rejected Claims 19-21, 26-29 and 34 under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Coleman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,754,957) in view of Ono (U.S. Patent No. 7,523,635). These rejections are respectfully traversed in light of the amendments to the claims.

As amended, Claim 19 now recites in part the method comprising the step of:

(d)     subjecting the wheel disc to at least a second window piercing operation to produce a second window portion in the wheel disc, *the second window portion being formed in the wheel disc in a separate portion of the wheel disc not including the first window portion*, the first window portion and the second window portion cooperating to define a pierced window in the wheel disc having a predetermined shape defined by the adjacent pairs of spokes and the side edge surface of the rim connecting flange such that each of the pierced windows extends to an outermost periphery of the wheel disc;" (Emphasis added).

None of the references, alone or in proper combination, discloses or suggests such a method for producing a fabricated vehicle wheel as now recited in Claim 19.

Specifically, Ono discloses the steps of: 1) in Figs. 1(b) and 1(c), providing a mold 1 having a projection 1a which punches out a discoid 3b to form hole 4; 2) in Fig. 4(b) providing a mold 11 having a projection 11a which is repeatedly applied to press out the metal of the leftover portion 9 toward the holes 4a, 4b, so as to be deformed to a state shown in Fig. 4(c); and 3) in Fig. 4(c), providing a mold 12 having projections 12a and applying the mold to form the depressions 9a, 9b, as shown in Fig.

4(d). As can be seen from the above steps in Ono, the third step recited above removes additional “window” material from the window which was previously created in the first step of Ono. Ono does not disclose or suggest the step of “subjecting the wheel disc to at least a second window piercing operation to produce a second window portion in the wheel disc, *the second window portion being formed in the wheel disc in a separate portion of the wheel disc not including the first window portion*, as now recited in Claim 19. (Emphasis added). Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 19, along with dependent Claims 20-26, are patentable over the cited references.

Additionally, with respect to dependent Claim 26, this claim has been amended to further recites the limitation “the two clearance zones being defined at two connecting zones of the first window portion to the second window portion, the two clearance zones establishing a departure from a profile of the pierced window predetermined shape”. As discussed in the specification of the present application on pages 15-16 “One advantage of the present invention is that ... Also, the openings (e.g. the openings 72A in the first embodiment and the openings 170A and 172A in the second embodiment), formed during the window piercing operations are operative to define or provide the clearance or overlapping zones (zones 52 in Fig. 2 and zones 152A and 152B in Fig. 9). The clearance zones eliminate the concern of positioning the multiple window piercing operations exactly. In other words, without the clearance zones, it would be difficult to precisely line up or align the profiles of the respective window portions with one another which are formed during the multiple piercing operations. The clearance zones also reduce or eliminate the possibility of a rough edge due to non exact alignment of the multiple window piercing operations.” None of the prior art references discloses or suggests such “clearance zones” as now recited in Claim 26. Thus, it is believed that dependent Claim 26 is further patentable over the cited references.

Independent Claim 27 has been amended to include the same limitations now recited and discussed above in Claim 19. Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 19, it is believed that Claim 27, along with dependent Claims 28-34, are patentable over the cited references.

Dependent Claim 34 has been amended to include the same limitations now recited and discussed above in dependent Claim 26. Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 26, it is believed that Claim 34 is further patentable over the cited references.

New independent Claim 35 is similar to amended Claim 19 in that Claim 35 recites the step of “forming a second window portion in the wheel disc in a separate portion of the wheel disc not including the first window portion”. Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 19, it is believed that Claim 35, along with dependent Claims 36-42, are patentable over the cited references.

On page 4 of the Official Action, the Examiner has indicated that Claims 22-25 and 30-33 contain allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that the base claims from which these claims depend are patentable. Thus, in this amendment none of these claims have been rewritten in independent form.

In view of the above amendments and accompanying remarks, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner does not believe that the above remarks and amendments place the application in condition for allowance, or if the Examiner has any comments or suggestions, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner please contact Applicants’ attorney by telephone at (419) 255-5900 to discuss this application prior to the issuance of a further action in this case by the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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